

# STATE OF ALASKA THE LEGISLATURE

2023

**Source**  
CSHJR 6(RES) am

**Legislative  
Resolve No.**  
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Supporting oil and gas leasing and development within the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska; and urging President Biden and the United States Department of the Interior to approve the Willow Master Development Plan.

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## **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

**WHEREAS**, in 1923, President Warren G. Harding issued an Executive Order establishing Naval Petroleum Reserve No. 4 on the North Slope region to provide a potential supply of oil for the United States Navy; and

**WHEREAS** 42 U.S.C. 6501 (Naval Petroleum Reserves Production Act of 1976) redesignated Naval Petroleum Reserve No. 4 as the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska and transferred responsibility for its administration to the Secretary of the Interior; and

**WHEREAS** the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska encompasses 23,500,000 acres, with boundaries extending south from Icy Cape to the drainage divide of the Brooks Range, then following the divide eastward to 156 degrees west longitude, then north to the Colville River, and following the Colville River downstream to its mouth; and

**WHEREAS** the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska falls entirely within the boundary of the North Slope Borough and includes the communities of Anaktuvuk Pass,

Atqasuk, Nuiqsut, Utqiagvik, and Wainwright; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2017, the United States Geological Survey estimated there to be 8,700,000,000 barrels of recoverable oil and 25,000,000,000,000 cubic feet of recoverable gas reserves in the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska; and

**WHEREAS** the 2020 National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska Integrated Activity Plan and Environmental Impact Statement estimates potential annual government revenue, including local, state, and federal taxes and royalties, of \$730,000,000 to \$4,750,000,000 from oil and gas development in the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska; and

**WHEREAS** the 2020 National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska Integrated Activity Plan and Environmental Impact Statement estimates that the exploration, development, and production of oil and gas in the reserve could generate 3,600 direct jobs and 2,750 indirect jobs annually over a period of 30 years; and

**WHEREAS** the Willow oil and gas prospect, known as the Willow project, is located in the Bear Tooth Unit of the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska and would be the farthest-west producing field on the North Slope; and

**WHEREAS** the Willow project would tap into reserves of an estimated 600,000,000 barrels of oil and, at peak production, produce 180,000 barrels a day; and

**WHEREAS** the Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for the Willow Master Development Plan was developed over multiple years through a rigorous process with significant involvement by and support from local communities and Alaska Native entities and was specifically designed to protect surface values and the Inupiat way of life; and

**WHEREAS**, on February 1, 2023, the United States Department of the Interior released its Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for the Willow project, which demonstrates that the project is legally sufficient and environmentally sound; and

**WHEREAS** the Inupiat people are the longstanding stewards of the land on which the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska sits, and take seriously the need for careful and balanced stewardship; and

**WHEREAS** the Arctic Slope Regional Corporation, the Inupiat Community of the Arctic Slope, the North Slope Borough, the Alaska Federation of Natives, the Alaska Native Village Corporation Association, the ANCSA Regional Association, the City of Utqiagvik, the City of Wainwright, the City of Atqasuk, and the Kuukpik Corporation are all united in

support of the Willow project; and

**WHEREAS** the Willow project has received the support of labor unions and trade groups, including the Alaska Petroleum Joint Crafts Council, the Alaska Support Industry Alliance, the Alaska AFL-CIO, the International Union of Operating Engineers, the Laborers' International Union of North America, the National Association of Manufacturers, the North America's Building Trades Unions, and the Alaska Chamber of Commerce; and

**WHEREAS** Representative Mary Peltola, Senator Lisa Murkowski, and Senator Dan Sullivan, the Alaska delegation in Congress, unanimously support approval of the Willow project; and

**WHEREAS** state royalties from oil and gas development in the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska are allocated to the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska Impact Mitigation Fund, which is used to provide the local communities of Anaktuvuk Pass, Atkasuk, Nuiqsut, Wainwright, Utqiagvik, and the North Slope Borough with grants to mitigate impacts related to oil and gas development; and

**WHEREAS** oil and gas development in the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska would strengthen national security and provide long-lasting benefits to the national economy by creating thousands of jobs nationwide, generating billions of dollars in government revenue, providing affordable energy to American consumers, and decreasing dependence on foreign energy; and

**WHEREAS** resource development in the state has benefited rural communities by bringing family-supporting jobs and wages, increased educational opportunities, safe water and wastewater facilities, and expanded health care services to those communities; and

**WHEREAS**, because of resource development, compared with the national average, rural areas of the state experienced greater increases in life expectancy between 1980 and 2014 in locations where resource development activities, including oil and gas development, mining, and fisheries operations, have occurred; and

**WHEREAS** safe and responsible oil and gas exploration, development, and production has been demonstrated by over 50 years of activity on the North Slope region without adverse effects on the environment or wildlife populations; and

**WHEREAS** the state's leadership in the nation's energy future includes robust support for the development and implementation of renewable energy systems and sources to ensure

that cost-effective energy and power are provided to communities and individuals in the state; and

**WHEREAS** responsible resource development today equips communities in the state to make investments in technology and infrastructure to support the use of renewable sources of energy and power; and

**WHEREAS** the Willow project is an important part of a diverse energy future for the state and the nation;

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature urges the United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, to maximize the area available for oil and gas leasing and development within the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska while conserving and protecting valued fish, wildlife, subsistence, and cultural resources; and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature urges President Biden and the United States Department of the Interior to move forward with final approval of the Willow project by selecting the preferred Alternative E plan, which allows three drill sites, the minimum for the project to remain economically viable; and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED** that a further delay in approval or construction of the Willow project undermines the values and benefits of the project to the state and its residents and the nation, and is not in the public interest; and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature urges the United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, when considering management activities related to the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska, to take into account the long history of safe and responsible oil and gas development on the North Slope region and the enormous benefits that development of oil and gas resources in the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska would bring to local communities, tribal governments, the state, and the nation.

**COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Joseph R. Biden, President of the United States; the Honorable Kamala D. Harris, Vice President of the United States and President of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Deb Haaland, United States Secretary of the Interior; the Honorable Tracy Stone-Manning, Director, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Department of the Interior; Steve Cohn, Alaska State Director, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Department of the Interior; and the Honorable Lisa Murkowski and the Honorable Dan

Sullivan, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Mary Peltola, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.